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Building A Housing Legacy

BALANCED BUDGET 2007 HIGHLIGHTS

Balanced Budget 2007 is dedicated to housing. It delivers a comprehensive range of new supports for British Columbians to help address the housing challenges created by a growing economy. This includes a legacy for our children: a new $250 million Housing Endowment Fund to deliver innovative housing solutions for the people of British Columbia.

New supports for the homeless. More options for seniors and those with special needs. Expanded rental assistance. Lower income taxes. Improved benefits for first-time homebuyers. Balanced Budget 2007 takes a major step towards ensuring every British Columbian has access to a safe, appropriate and affordable place to call home.

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Housing Endowment for Future Generations

The economy was strong in 2006, and British Columbia will finish 2006/07 with a significant surplus. It is prudent, when times are good, to put aside a portion of that surplus and create a legacy for our children.

Balanced Budget 2007 sets aside $250 million to establish a new ***Housing Endowment Fund***. The fund will generate approximately $10 million a year to support innovative housing solutions. It will help individuals and families with diverse housing needs that are not currently served through existing programs and services. This legacy from today's strong economy will stand in perpetuity and deliver benefits for generations to come.

Balanced Budget 2007 provides a ***comprehensive range of supports*** for everyone from the homeless to the homeowner, worth a total of $2 billion over four years, including:

More Supports for the Homeless

- An additional $27 million over three years to increase the number of year-round shelter beds by almost 30 per cent and provide related support services.
- An additional $38 million is dedicated to housing and support services for people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.
- Transition houses for women and children fleeing domestic violence will receive an additional $6 million over three years.

New Supports for Home Owners

- The First Time Home Buyers' Program is enhanced to exempt first-time buyers across British Columbia from paying the Property Transfer Tax on homes valued up to $375,000. This will save first-time buyers up to $5,500.
- Low-income seniors will be eligible for the Home Owner Grant, regardless of their home's assessed value.

- The government will introduce legislation to allow people to start deferring their property taxes at age 55, rather than age 60. This provides added budget flexibility for those on fixed incomes.

Higher Income Assistance Rates

- The shelter allowance for people on income assistance will increase by $50

Expanded Rental Assistance

- The Rental Assistance Program will expand so more lower-income working families qualify for benefits. An additional 5,800 families — more than 20,000 in total — will now be eligible to receive up to $563 a month to help with their housing costs.

Upgrading our Social Housing

- The Province will provide $45 million over four years to convert up to 750 social housing

Higher Income Assistance Rates

- The shelter allowance for people on income assistance will increase by $50 a month. British Columbia now has the highest shelter assistance rates in Canada for employable singles, couples and single-parent families.

month to help with their housing costs.

Upgrading our Social Housing

- The Province will provide $45 million over four years to convert up to 750 social housing units to supportive housing, to make them more accessible for seniors and others with special housing needs.

Tax Relief to Help Every Taxpayer With Their Housing Costs

10 per cent personal income tax reduction for individuals earning up to $100,000.

Taxable Income	B.C. tax before 2001 tax cuts	B.C. tax after 2007 tax cuts	Reduction in B.C. tax	Per cent change in B.C. tax
$15,000	$56	$0	$56	-100%
$20,000	$823	$256	$567	-69%
$30,000	$1,606	$1,023	$583	-36%
$40,000	$2,585	$1,679	$906	-35%
$50,000	$3,760	$2,484	$1,276	-34%
$60,000	$4,950	$3,299	$1,651	-33%
$70,000	$6,197	$4,142	$2,055	-33%
$80,000	$7,888	$5,210	$2,678	-34%
$100,000	$11,669	$7,766	$3,903	-33%
$120,000	$15,609	$10,706	$4,903	-31%
$150,000	$21,519	$15,116	$6,403	-30%

New Tax Relief

To help every taxpayer better manage their housing costs, Balanced Budget 2007 cuts

Step by Step

We will never be able to do everything we want to, all at the same time. However,

New Tax Relief

To help every taxpayer better manage their housing costs, Balanced Budget 2007 cuts personal income taxes by 10 per cent for British Columbians earning up to $100,000.

This latest personal income tax reduction builds on the 25 per cent tax cut introduced in 2001 and the BC Tax Reduction introduced in 2005.

As a result, 250,000 British Columbians now pay no provincial income tax, others have seen reductions of up to 70 per cent, and most have seen reductions of between 30 and 35 per cent.

A family of four with both parents working, earning a combined $70,000, will now save more than $1,800 a year compared to 2001.

This new tax relief will help every taxpayer in British Columbia with their housing costs.

Step by Step

We will never be able to do everything we want to, all at the same time. However, with careful planning and prudent management, we can make steady progress in priority areas… step by step.

Balanced Budget 2005 focused on seniors. Balanced Budget 2006 concentrated on the needs of our children.

And this budget – the third of five the government will table in its current mandate – is dedicated to housing, which affects us all.

We want to ensure all British Columbians share in the benefits of our thriving economy. Balanced Budget 2007 will help make housing more affordable and accessible for just about everyone in our province – today and for generations to come.

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